

Clinton for bringing it forward, for working with Republicans, at least those who were willing to work with him, and for having a program that has energized young people to be of service.

There are six former Peace Corps volunteers in this House, three Republicans, three Democrats. If you asked any one of us what was the most significant time in our lives, it was serving in the Peace Corps. It was helping others. But we came back more enriched than probably we gave. And I'm absolutely certain of this, the folks that are doing national service, they don't get much monetarily, but they give a lot; and in return they get a lot in terms of their personal development. They grow as individuals. They have more confidence in themselves. I think they're better Americans.

I hope whoever's the next President, and we have three good candidates to choose from, I have a preference obviously, but I think that they are going to inspire Americans to be of greater service, and they could use this legislation to help them.

I hope we pass it, and I thank our sponsors for bringing this bill out. I particularly want to thank our colleagues from New York and from Pennsylvania for their effort here today. God bless this country and God bless this program.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Chairman, I'd like to yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER), a member of the Healthy Families and Communities Subcommittee.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Chairman, as a former social worker and administrator and a cosponsor of the GIVE Act, I rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 2857.

I was able to see firsthand the hard work and self-sacrifice and dedication of our AmeriCorps volunteers during the Katrina recovery effort. As a relief volunteer myself, I worked side by side with the AmeriCorps volunteers. You can't say enough about these young people who gave of themselves and worked tirelessly for many, many hours to give comfort to their fellow Americans. This convinced me how essential AmeriCorps and other national service programs really are to this Nation.

My experiences as a social worker and as an administrator and relief volunteer have made the reauthorization of this program a high priority for me, and I'm proud that it's a high priority for this Congress as well.

I'm also grateful that the committee passed my amendment to increase the minimum amount of the State formula grants. This increase acknowledges that these volunteer programs are equally important in smaller States such as New Hampshire. These programs and the participants who are in them work miracles for very low money, and we need to thank them.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Chairman, I'd like to reserve the balance of my time at this point.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND), a former member of the Education Committee.

Mr. KIND. Madam Chairman, I want to thank and commend my good friend Mrs. MCCARTHY from New York for the wonderful leadership that she has shown in the reauthorization of this important legislation.

I agree with my good friend and colleague from Connecticut that this is one of the more important pieces of legislation that we will be dealing with in this session of Congress, and I commend the efforts of everyone on the committee for the bipartisan support that's been shown on behalf of this bill.

Madam Chairman, this legislation will provide a vital increase in funding for a variety of domestic volunteer service programs, including AmeriCorps, Volunteers in Service to America, and Learn and Serve America. Expanding these important community-based programs is essential so that residents in the neediest places receive the assistance that they need and deserve.

I'm very proud that my home State of Wisconsin has more than 35 AmeriCorps programs. Jump Start for Young Children is just one of several programs that help prepare young children from low-income families to succeed and go on in school. Just this past year, this program benefited from the service of 3,500 corps members and volunteers from over 70 colleges. Together, these individuals were able to assist more than 13,000 preschoolers in over 20 of our States in this country. I'd like to applaud the hard work and selfless efforts of these individuals who have not only rebuilt houses in communities but also lives.

I'm especially proud that three of my congressional staff members are former AmeriCorps volunteers: Karrie Jackelen, Brad Smith, and David De Gennaro. The contributions of these participants is truly admirable given the enormous difference they've made in so many lives.

Mr. Chairman, there is a yearning for community involvement and community service across this country, and it's especially acute with the youth, the children of our Nation.

It was unfortunate that the current President sent this Nation to war without asking for any type of contribution or significant sacrifice from the average American. Except for our troops and their families who have borne the brunt of this sacrifice and burden, there's very little asked of the American people.

This legislation, which was the vision of President Clinton and his administration, tries to correct that deficiency. It's a good, bipartisan bill. I encourage my colleagues to pass the GIVE Act today.

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Chairman, I will continue to reserve my time.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN).

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act, otherwise known as the GIVE Act. This legislation speaks to what makes our country great, Americans volunteering to give back to their communities. Volunteerism is so important to helping the less fortunate, working to better one's community, and instilling a sense of patriotism and love for one's country.

Volunteers are critical to pulling our country through hard times. Following the hurricanes that plagued my home State of Florida, I witnessed firsthand the overwhelming response from volunteers who came out to respond to the needs of hurricane victims. Volunteers came together to provide these victims with clothing, food, shelter, and other items that displaced residents and families needed to get their lives back on track.

The GIVE Act will continue this strong tradition of volunteerism in America by increasing community service opportunities and providing new incentives for volunteering.

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Furthermore, I am proud to support legislation that puts a premium on disaster preparedness and emergency response.

I would like to commend Representative MCCARTHY for her work on this bill and urge my colleagues to support this bill for the betterment of all our communities and our country as a whole.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. HOLDEN). Each side has 11 minutes remaining.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, with that, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, as we have been working through this bill, through our hearings and everything else, and listening to the volunteers that work in AmeriCorps and other aspects of volunteering, and also listening to our young people from communities that are underserved on how they want to serve and be part of it, before my colleague from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) talked about how we've done away with summer jobs. We see in our communities today more and more of our young people joining gangs and getting into trouble. We see that our juvenile justice system and our prisons are being overflowed, unfortunately, with young people. This is a program that can help them.

You know, I look at our country and I marvel at how people volunteer and give their time to help other people that are in need. With the programs that we're putting forth and through the work of the subcommittee and